

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 7-8, 10-35 and 65-88 are pending herein.

1. Applicants have canceled the non-elected claims, for pursuit in subsequent divisional applications.

2. Claims 1-8 and 13-35 were rejected under Section 102(e). Claim 1 has been amended herein to incorporate the features of claim 9. Accordingly, the rejection over Schaefer et al. is moot and should be withdrawn.

3. Claims 1-6 and 9-35 were rejected under Section 102(b) over Burger et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The claimed invention (claim 1) is drawn to an ESD safe ceramic component comprised of a zirconia toughened alumina base material, and a resistivity modifier effective to reduce the electrical resistivity of the base material. The resistivity modifier comprises a transition metal oxide in an amount within a range of about 5 to about 40 volume % with respect to the base material. Burger et al. disclose a ceramic composition composed principally of an aluminum oxide base material. The composition contains at least 70% by volume of the base material, which may have a relatively small content of chromium oxide, 0.01 to 2.32 weight percent. Further, zirconium dioxide is present in the base material. Burger et al. go on to disclose that the composition may also include a wear resistant component, such as a carbide, nitride or carbonitride, as pointed out by the PTO. However, Burger et al. do not disclose (or even remotely suggest) an ESD safe ceramic component comprised of zirconia toughened alumina and a transition metal oxide resistivity modifier. Further, Burger et al. do not disclose the particular content of the transition metal oxide, within a range of about 5 to 40 volume% with respect to the base material.

Claim 28 and the claims dependent thereon are drawn to further patentable subject matter over the disclosure of Burger et al. Clearly, Burger et al. not only fail to disclose the claimed transition metal oxide, but also fail to disclose volume resistivity as recited. Similarly, claim 33 is also patentable over Burger et al.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Burger et al. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Section 102(b) rejection over Burger et al. is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to issue a Notice of Allowance for all pending claims.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action by the Applicants would be desirable for placing this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number 50-3797.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

11/24/06

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